



MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

Meeting Date: August 13, 2020

Agenda Item: Madison River Recreation Petition from Montana Sportsmen Associations: George Grant Trout Unlimited, Skyline Sportsmen Association and Anaconda Sportsmen Association

Action Needed: Proposal

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 15 minutes

Background: The George Grant Trout Unlimited, Skyline Sportsmen Association, Anaconda Sportsmen Association, submitted a petition to the Commission on June 18, 2020 for rulemaking related to river recreation on the Madison River. The petition requests the Commission to initiate rulemaking based on increasing use of the river and the potential for negative impacts to the fishery, and requests the following specific actions: 1) Capping the number of trips issued for commercial use at 2019 levels; 2) Establish two rest-rotation sections where commercial activity is prohibited one day per week on a seasonal basis; 3) Prohibiting the use of a vessel or float tube to gain access to fishing in the wade-only reaches on a seasonal basis; 4) Limit vessel or float tube access to carry-in only for any new access acquisitions below Greycliff FAS; 5) Establish a no-cost, no-limit Madison River Stamp for all river users; and 6) implement access site management

Public Involvement Process & Results: While the Fish and Wildlife commission, FWP staff, and external partners share a long history of working on the Madison River, this petition in its entirety has not been formally reviewed and vetted with the public.

Alternatives & Analysis: Pursuant to 2-4-315, MCA, the Commission must either deny the petition or initiate rulemaking on the petition. If the Commission chooses to propose rule language other than what is contained in the petition, the Commission must deny the petition and then propose rule language. In the alternative, if the Commission will choose portions of the petition(s) to adopt/deny, it must be clearly indicated on the record.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale: The Department recommends the Commission propose rule language regarding management of recreational use on the Madison River for public comment, whether based on this petition or not.